

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks in a Meeting With Members of the Congressional Black Caucus
February 2, 2023

The President. Well, folks, I want to thank the CBC for coming down, and the leaders, to come down to the White House. We've got a lot to talk about.

I want to congratulate Congressman Horsford on his election to this body.

Congressional Black Caucus Chair Representative Steven A. Horsford. Thank you.

The President. And he got elected early on, in spite of the fact that I was for him. But anyway. *[Laughter]* But the—congratulations.

Rep. Horsford. Thank you very much.

The President. And we talk about progress we made together and the investments we made in the African American community, the Black community, from—everything from HBCUs to jobs, to health care, and a range of other things.

But, to state the obvious, everybody knows that Tyre was buried—just laid to rest. The Vice President went to the funeral. I spent time on the telephone with his mom and his stepfather. And you know, my hope is this dark memory spurs some action that we've all been fighting for. And—although, we've just got to keep at it.

I listened to Al Sharpton's eulogy, which I thought was first rate. And we've got to just stay at it as long as it takes.

The House passed police reform back in 2021 when the Democrats controlled the House, and it passed the George Floyd Act. And, Cory, you worked like hell—like heck in the Senate. You came close, but—you know, and—but it's—what we did—I was able to, through Executive order, make some significant changes at the Federal level, which I want to share with you all—not necessarily take the time today—but to go through the implementation of each of the initiatives we put forward.

The absolute deadline for each of the agencies to demonstrate that they've met the requirements is the end of May—of March. And so we—I want to—we'll meet before then, but I want to sit down and go into the detail about that.

And—but I, most of all, would like to talk with you guys and you—whatever you want to talk about. But from my perspective is: How can we make some progress on police reform of consequence and violence in our communities? And I assume that's the primary thing we're going to talk about, but anything else is on the table.

So thank you all. Do you want to say anything, Mr. Chairman?

Rep. Horsford. I just want to thank you, Mr. President and Mr.—Madam Vice President, for making this a priority today.

The death of Tyre Nichols is yet another example of why we do need action. But you've already led on the action that we've been able to take through Executive order.

We need your help to make sure we can get the legislative actions that are necessary to save lives and to make public safety the priority that it needs to be for all communities. So I want to thank you for that.

The President. Well, thank you.

Folks, we're going to get to work. Thank you for coming in.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:49 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to RowVaughn Wells, mother, and Rodney Wells, stepfather, of Tyre Nichols, who died on January 10 as a result of injuries he received during an encounter with Memphis, TN, police officers following a traffic stop on January 7; political activist and commentator Alfred C. Sharpton, Jr.; and Sen. Cory A. Booker. Also participating were Sen. Raphael G. Warnock and Reps. James E. Clyburn, Sheila Jackson Lee, and Joseph D. Neguse.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Congressional Black Caucus members, meeting with the President.

Locations: Washington, DC.

Names: Booker, Cory A.; Harris, Kamala D.; Horsford, Steven A.; Sharpton, Alfred C., Jr.; Wells, Rodney; Wells, RowVaughn.

Subjects: Congress, Members, meetings with President; Congressional Black Caucus; Health insurance, access and availability; Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); Policing best practices, improvement efforts; Tennessee, police-involved beating and death in Memphis; Vice President.

DCPD Number: DCPD202300079.